



RENEWS

SUMMER 2007

News from the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation • Offering Renewed Hope to All Involved

Hoosiers, TRF style

Putnamville Correctional Facility is up and running

BY KIMBERLY KING

Al Parke beamed as the first six thoroughbreds stepped off the trailer at the Putnamville Correctional Facility, launching a new chapter for the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation and for a handful of inmates whose lives are sure to be enriched by the sextet of retirees.

The inmates, some who'd never been this close to a horse before, took the lead shanks and walked the Thoroughbreds to their new trough for a drink of water.

"This is a historic day in Indiana," said Parke, who was Putnamville's prison superintendent when the TRF program was introduced but was recently promoted to the position of Southern Regional Director for the Indiana Department of Corrections. "It's historic for these men, and these horses."

This moment had been three years in the making. Three years earlier, I came to Parke to see if he'd be interested in building a TRF farm at the prison.

"A program like that might fit in just perfectly here," he said.

From that point on, Parke made it his mission to see the TRF farm come to life.

"When I talked to people with the



TRF horses arrive at Putnamville Correctional

TRF's program at Blackburn Correctional Complex, I could see how prisoners took pride in working with the horses," Parke said. "You have a schedule, learn a set of skills, and you're responsible for live breathing animals. The inmates get attached."

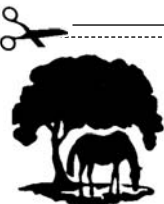
Al is soft spoken but firm. He has both his undergraduate and graduate degrees in psychology. Congenial and outgoing,

he's always up for easy conversation with staffers and inmates alike.

He's also earned a reputation as one of the best corrections administrators in the state, supervising 2,400 medium-security male inmates seven days a week inside the compound encased with 12-foot high barbed-wire fence.

"Al is the kind of administrator staff

Continued on page 2



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John Murrell Receives TRF Champion Award

He'd be the last one to tell you, but when it comes to helping out horses in need, John Murrell has a heart the size of his native Texas. The 52-year-old Dallas businessman, who runs a small oil and gas company, has been a lifelong fan of horses, and has been recognized for his efforts to help put an end to horse slaughter with the TRF Champion Award.

Murrell will receive the award August 5 in Saratoga.

"John has always been a very big supporter," said Monique Koehler, TRF Founder and Chairman of the Board. "He never met a horse he doesn't love. He's an angel. Whenever we need help, he's the first to step up, and he never even has to be asked."

That's because, for Murrell, ensuring equine athletes a dignified retirement is just the right thing to do.

"I love horse racing, I love the people, and I want to protect the beautiful animals that support our sport," explained Murrell. "Anybody who loves and desires the best for the horse will help put an end to slaughter in this country."

Murrell was first introduced to racing through his parents, John H. and Charlene Murrell.

"My father and mother were in horse racing for 50 years," Murrell explained. "Walter Kelley trained for them in New York and Florida. Dad had some great horses back in the 1960s, like Impressive and Sunrise Flight. When I was four years old, my



John and Kelly Murrell at Belmont Park

dad took me to the backside of Hialeah Park, back in the good ol' days, and I've been hooked ever since."

Sunrise Flight won the Gallant Fox Handicap and Tropical Park Handicap in 1963, while Impressive captured the Saratoga Special as a two-year-old of 1965 and the Fall Highweight Handicap a year later.

With horses of that ilk driving his love of the sport, Murrell soon followed in his parents' footsteps. He was just a junior in high school when he purchased his first runner, and would later go on to own a very good racehorse in Johns Treasure, who ran second to Danzig Connection in the 1986 Belmont Stakes, with that year's Kentucky Derby winner, Ferdinand, back in third.

Ironically, it was the tragic end to Ferdinand, most likely in a Japanese slaughterhouse in 2002, that inspired Murrell to become active in the campaign against horse slaughter.

"When I found out about Ferdinand in Japan, that's when I decided that I had to do something," he stated. "So I did some research, and I went to work in the anti-horse-slaughter movement."

Today, Murrell, in addition to lending a hand to organizations like the TRF, keeps a small seven-horse stable in training with James C. Hudson. Murrell races primarily on the Louisiana circuit.

Previous winners of the TRF Champion Award include Linda Miller, John Hettinger, John Stuart and Penny Chenery.

From page 1

always learn from," said J. David Donahue, Commissioner for Indiana's Department of Corrections. "He is a good communicator and his ability to coach and encourage is second to none. He is a consummate professional, and I couldn't say anything nicer about him."

For the last three years, Parke has worked with inmates and prison staff to build a beautiful Indiana TRF farm. Inmates set wooden fence posts and strung fence around 50 acres of lush green pasture that will swell to 100 acres in the fall. They rebuilt and added onto the circa 1930s barn that now has 14 stalls. The barn lumber was forested and hulled from mature trees off Putnamville's state-owned land. Prisoners have also built an adjacent classroom where they'll take vocational classes in horsemanship and care. Parke, a stickler

for details, even had prisoners enrolled in agriculture classes to help with the farm's final touches. A decorative flowerbed of red, yellow and purple pansies serves as a spring welcome to anyone driving the gravel road to the new TRF barn.

About 20 inmates, with security clearance to work off site, will work at the prison farm 50 miles west of Indianapolis. The farm is on Putnamville's 2,800-acre property but actually sits across the street from the prison's main compound on US-40 highway just outside Greencastle. Barb Holcomb is the program's equine manager. A lifetime horsewoman and longtime corrections staffer, Holcomb was hand-picked by Parke to head up the farm and vocational training program for prisoners.

"We're going to try to fill it by July or August with 15 students and I think it's going to be a fantastic program," said Parke. "When you have offenders actively

engaged in vocational programs you have a better opportunity for successful release."

Parke works in Indiana but his blood runs "Kentucky Blue." His office is filled with his beloved Bluegrass memorabilia including a '98 championship souvenir basketball signed by former UK coach Tubby Smith. Born and raised in Kentucky, the horseracing capital of the world, Parke's love for the Thoroughbred came naturally.

You can bet that when he can, Parke will be at the fence line feeding carrots to Putnamville's newest four-legged retirees he helped find safe haven in Indiana.

Kimberly King is a reporter for WXIN-TV, the Fox affiliate in Indianapolis. She's been deeply involved in Thoroughbred rescue programs in Indiana for years and is heading up Indiana's organizing committee.

New initiatives, new manager for TRF's Maker's Mark Secretariat Center

The Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation is forging new ground at the Maker's Mark Secretariat Center at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington, Kentucky. Kathryn Kincannon Irwin has been named the MMSC's general manager, and she will incorporate the natural horsemanship for which she and her husband, Chris Irwin, are well known into programs for retraining retirees for second careers. While the MMSC will continue to be a showcase for adoptable retired Thoroughbred racehorses, Irwin's duties will also include developing the center into a teaching facility that will promote advanced horsemanship skills for retraining retired racehorses.

She will be assisted in her duties by her husband, a horse trainer whose natural horsemanship skills have won him worldwide acclaim. The San Diego Union-Tribune wrote of Chris Irwin: "Forget Robert Redford and The Horse Whisperer. With Chris Irwin, think Dr. Phil for horses. Better yet, think Dr. Phil for horse owners and riders." Chris Irwin has also written several books on the subject of natural horsemanship, including the bestseller "Horse Don't Lie."

Never has this effort been more needed and more important. With the number of retired thoroughbred racehorses continuing to rise, the TRF is committed to finding better ways to retrain them and to expanding partnerships to enhance the chances of placement for these horses.

"For years, Chris and Kathryn have worked with TRF's horses in clinics and during demonstrations at Keeneland Race Course and various other venues around the country," said TRF President Johnathan Miller.

"We are thrilled to expand this relationship so that Chris and Kathryn can make the MMSC a national headquarters for training adoptable horses and educating owners and handlers on the most effective methods of handling retired Thoroughbreds."

"With the emphasis on programming that the Irwins bring to the Maker's Mark Secretariat Center, there is no doubt that they are a wonderful addition to the team," said Fran Taylor of the Keeneland Foundation. "As with any start up program, achievement comes in phases and the MMSC is ready to move to the next level by offering more programs and by bringing other retired Thoroughbred racehorse nonprofit agencies into the fold."

Keeneland was instrumental in the creation of the center as it introduced longtime race sponsor Maker's Mark to the concept of an adoption site for retired thoroughbreds at the KHP. Maker's Mark, in turn, gave the lead gift of \$500,000 to make the project possible through the sale of a series of limited edition bottles featuring Triple Crown winners Secretariat, Seattle Slew and Affirmed.

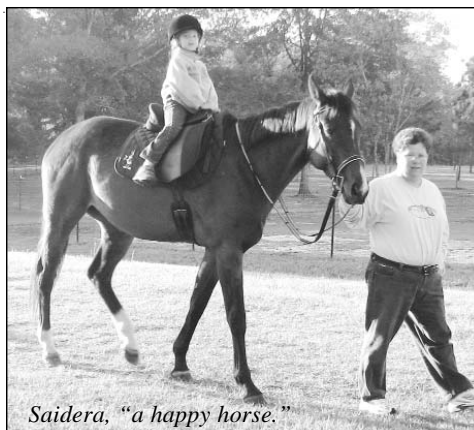


LETTERS

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Saidera, "a happy horse."

The best part is that (Saidera) is a happy horse. She nickers throughout the day and she loves people. When my daughter goes to the pasture, Saidera gingerly walks up and keeps her head low so that they are at eye contact level. She knows that she is either going to get a hug or a snack, if not both. I just want to say thank you so much for such a great opportunity to have her in our family.

Lt. Kelli Smith

I had to send you these photos that I took of my daughter and Saratoga or "Togi," as we call him. I cannot say enough about this horse. My 11-year-old son is able to take him out on the trail by himself with a few of the people from the barn next door and has no problem with him at all. He is about the most honest horse I could have picked or you could have picked for my kids, especially my 7-year-old daughter...Thanks so much for such a great horse.

Celine Karabinos & family



"Togi"

I cannot begin to tell you how awesome this guy is. Each day (Razz'n Jazz) becomes more and more of a big gushy love...I felt so comfortable and safe with this guy that after just a few rides I decided to be brave and jumped on him bareback. He was awesome. He could not have cared less that I was sitting on him and just strutted around like he usually does.

Victoria Palmieri



Razz'n Jazz and Victoria Palmieri

We celebrated North of Suez's birthday this past Sunday—he is 22.

Can you believe it!! He will have been here eight years in September. He is truly the most magnificent animal I have ever known and I thank God everyday for the privilege of caring for him.

Maryellen Pheiffer



North of Suez



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IN THIS ISSUE:

- *Newest TRF farm opens*
- *Murrell is a champion*
- *Letters, letters, letters*
- *Big news at the MMSC*
- *Rosenberg in the spotlight*



About the TRF

Founded in 1982, the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation is a nonprofit organization that provides lifetime retirement for Thoroughbreds at satellite and TRF-operated farms in states that include Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin, and through private adoptions. The principal retirement programs are located at state correctional facilities, where the horses' caretakers are prison inmates and juvenile offenders who derive both emotional and educational benefits from pioneering TRF vocational programs in horse care. The work of the TRF is wholly dependent on public support.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT Elizabeth Rosenberg

What does Elizabeth Rosenberg do for the TRF? What doesn't she do?

Rosenberg, an artist who moved to Kentucky a year and a half ago, has sponsored TRF horses, adopted a TRF horse, visited TRF horses to feed them carrots and does a number of office jobs at the Maker's Mark Secretariat Center, a TRF facility.

Rosenberg's interest in the TRF began when her husband bought her a sponsorship in a TRF horse named Tigrilla for her birthday. It was her introduction to the TRF, and she was hooked. She calls her involvement with the organization, "my love affair with TRF." Since the initial sponsorship of Tigrilla, she has sponsored another horse, paid for his surgery, adopted a horse named Paoli and pitches in at the Secretariat Center.

"Every person who could possibly ever adopt one of these horses would get more out of it than they ever give," Rosenberg said. "Sponsoring the horses and going to visit them is also extremely pleasurable. I visit the infirm and bring them carrots every week. At the Secretariat Center, most of the people prefer to spend time around the horses. So, I found that I can help out with things like filing and mailings."

Having already gone above and beyond the call of duty, Rosenberg intends to do even more. She and her husband have bought 16 ½ acres in Shelby County, Kentucky and will use the land to care for as many as five TRF horses. The only thing Rosenberg expects to receive in return is the love of these retired Thoroughbreds.

"I'm doing this because I love horses so much and because I have something to give to them," she



Elizabeth Rosenberg with Paoli

said. "What I am giving to them is helping in other ways with the human element. To help the TRF is to help an organization that places horses to help disabled kids and does wonderful work with the prisoners. A lot of times those are horses that are rideable. I can take horses who aren't rideable and give them a home, which frees up a spot for another horse at Blackburn or at the Secretariat Center to be saved. That makes me feel like I'm helping with more than just five horses. I don't have a thousand acres and I don't have a million dollars but I do what I can do."